

STANDARD 2: UNIT AND PROGRAM ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION

The education unit implements an assessment and evaluation system for ongoing program and unit evaluation and improvement. The system collects, analyzes, and utilizes data on candidate and program completer performance and unit operations. Assessment in all programs includes ongoing and comprehensive data collection related to candidate qualifications, proficiencies, and competence, as well as program effectiveness, and is used for improvement purposes.

In developing a deeper understanding of the language in Common Standard 2, staff has developed the language provided below about collecting, analyzing, and utilizing (CAU) data at both the program and unit level.

	Collect	Analyze	Utilize
	'Gather data'	'Organize data'	'Drive decision making'
Unit	Related to the Common Standards: 1) Leadership, 3) Resources, 4) Faculty, 5) Admission, and 6) Advice & Assistance. Collect data in ongoing manner and comprehensive manner	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Organize the data within the unit and its program(s)Discuss the data with faculty and others within the unit and its program(s).Draw conclusions from the data to inform decision-making in unit and its program(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Use the analysis of the data for unit and program(s) improvement purposesDocument the cycle of improvement decision making for the unit and its programsDocument actions taken, the basis of those actions and how/when the results will be reviewed next
Program	Related to the candidate competencies identified in the Program Standards as well as program effectiveness. Collect from candidates, completers, employers, field supervisors and faculty in ongoing and comprehensive manner	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Organize the data within the programDiscuss the data with faculty and others working with the programDraw conclusions from the data to inform decision-making in the program	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Use the analysis of the data for program improvement purposesDocument actions taken, the basis of those actions and how/when the results will be reviewed next at the program level

Discussions have taken place about some institutions where each program has its own program evaluation and improvement process in place but the education unit at the institution has not developed or has developed but not yet implemented a unit evaluation and improvement process.

When Common Standard 2 was newly adopted, staff and members of the BIR talked about the standard as having two main parts—the program evaluation and improvement process and the unit evaluation and improvement process. If one of the parts was in operation, usually the program evaluation and improvement system, then the standard was at least **Met with Concerns**.

As the Common Standards have been implemented for a few years, it has become clear that program evaluation systems operating in isolation from one another—regardless of how effectively they are operating—do not collectively provide evidence of a single unit assessment system. In this case, the fact that there are data being collected, analyzed, and utilized (CAU'ed) at the unit level (in isolation of program improvement efforts) is insufficient evidence of a unit assessment system under the standard.

The standard requires that the unit “*implement* an assessment and evaluation system,” but teams are constantly agonizing over *how much* of the system needs to be fully operational in order for the standard to be met. Does “implements” mean that the institution has *initiated* the process of *collecting* data on program effectiveness and unit operations, or does it mean that the unit has *completed* the process of *collecting, analyzing, and utilizing data over a sufficiently long period of time to demonstrate that the process is “ongoing.”*

Coming to a Standard Finding on Common Standard 2

Unit-wide system integrates with approved programs	Unit Assessment and Evaluation (unit operations—Common Standards)			Program Assessment and Evaluation (candidates, completers, and program effectiveness)			Common Standard 2 Finding
	Collect	Analyze	Utilize	Collect	Analyze	Utilize	
Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Met
Designed, not fully implemented yet ¹	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Met with Concerns
	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	
	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	
	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	
	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	
Designed, but not implemented ²	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	No	Not Met
	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	
	Yes	No	No	Yes	No	No	
No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	
	Yes	No	No	Yes	No	No	
	No	No	No	No	No	No	

Integrated Unit-wide System Options: Yes; Designed but not yet implemented; No

¹ Most of these rows describe a unit that meets the program CAU criteria on a program-by-program basis, as well as performing CAU on some aspects of unit operations (e.g., resources, faculty qualifications and service, admissions demographics). The program data are used within, but not across programs; the unit data are used to guide decisions at the unit level through processes separate from those used for program-by-program decision making. In this case, a reviewer could find evidence of data-informed improvements at both the program and unit level, but they would be the result of “parallel processing” rather than an actual unit assessment system.

² These rows are variations on units that have *designed* but not *implemented* a unit assessment system. Many accreditation visits encounter “work in progress” with regard to unit assessment. The intent is to prompt further discussion on how many pieces need to be absent before the finding goes from **Met with Concerns** to **Not Met**. These, therefore, are additional examples of “system on paper” vs. “system in reality.”